SACRAMENTAL MARRIAGE

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Sandoli, Annie. “MA Catholics Condemn Attempt to Ban LGBTQ+ People from Sacraments.” *Patch*.*com*. 13 Dec. 2021. 22 Dec. 2021. Web.

The Diocese of Marquette, Michigan, has promulgated a document entitled *Created in the Image and Likeness of God*: *An Instruction on Some Aspects of the Pastoral Care of Persons with Same‐Sex Attraction and Gender Dysphoria*. It says: “Persons who are living in a same-sex sexual relationship (or in any sexual relationship outside of an ecclesiastically recognized marriage between one man and one woman) should not present themselves for Holy Communion.”

It seems to me that the reference to “an ecclesiastically recognized marriage” is problematic. According to Catholic doctrine, a marriage occurs when two persons confer the sacrament upon each other without impediment; the priest is only a witness. Thus, theoretically, a man and a woman, both baptized Catholics, stranded on a desert island, who pledge their troth to one another without reservation, become fully married. And they do so “outside of an ecclesiastically recognized marriage . . .” Sexual relations would not prevent them from subsequently presenting themselves for communion (after their rescue!).

Perhaps the saying about “ecclesiastically recognized marriage” was added because the Diocese really does intend the phrase to limit communion to spouses officially married in the church in a documented way. If the Diocese does not require that all marriages, to be official, be filtered through the institutional Church, then its ability to deny people sacraments based on irregular relationships or sexual sins would be limited.